



HARAMBEE FLAME



a publication of the harambee afrikan cultural organization

VOLUME V

No. 1

January

1984

JACKSON'S RABBIT

Thanks to the efforts of presidential candidate Jesse Jackson, Lt. Robert Goodman is no longer a prisoner of war in Syria. Media people and politicians in the U.S., most of whom probably initially viewed Jackson's announced mission with something akin to amusement, are now scratching their heads wondering how Jackson was able to pull this rabbit out of his hat.

Pulling a rabbit out of one's hat is, of course, a "magic" trick, a feat which astounds. The successful Jackson mission, if we understand international politics and the role the U.S. has played in the affairs of the Third World, should not be seen as a trick but as a very understandable event.

With respect to the question of international politics, we have to bear in mind the value of world opinion insofar as the crediting or discrediting of a given nation's actions is concerned. When, for example, the South Korean Jetliner was shot down by the Soviet Union, the U.S. portrayed the action as one of barbarism in which the U.S.S.R. had knowingly shot down an unarmed, commercial plane. The Soviet Union, on the other hand, claimed that the airliner was, at least in function, a spy-plane.

It now appears that, though the South Korean airliner was not necessarily on a spy mission, the U.S.S.R. probably did not know that the plane was a commercial craft carrying passengers and had sound reasons for believing that it was flying a reconnaissance mission. We probably will never know the entire truth about

H.A.C.O. THRUST - '84

As this is the first FLAME of the new year, it is fitting that we speak of some of the goals the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization would like to meet over the course of the next four or five months. You, the members of the organization, other prisoners here, and you other African folks with whom we have been or will come into contact with, can help us achieve these objectives.

- Increase the amount of reading and studying being done by our members.
- Increase our membership.
- Expand the participation by African people outside the prison in our meetings and other activities.
- Get the FLAME into many more hands and sell many more subscriptions. Also, get more of you to contribute articles to the FLAME.
- Put a substantially greater number of Harambee Thought T-Shirts on folks' backs.
- Become a more strong influence upon the African communities in Omaha and Lincoln.

These are some of the objectives we need to accomplish over the next few months. You are invited to be of whatever help you can be to us.

ONE-YEAR SUBSCRIPTION

SEND 6.00 TO: Harambee FLAME
P.O. Box 2500
Lincoln, NE.
68502-0500

c/o Harambee Afrikan Cultural Org.

this incident. Nevertheless, the point made by the extent of propaganda which was generated by this event is that governments know that world opinion is important and can spell either failure or success in their various efforts to achieve certain goals.

In order for the U.S. to get or maintain broad-based support for its current presence in Lebanon, it must portray itself as functioning in that country as a neutral peace-keeper. Functioning behind such an image, it can send its planes to do aerial reconnaissance over Syrian-held territory in Lebanon and then cry "foul" when the Syrians fire at those planes. Playing the role of peace-keeper-as-victim, it can then bomb or otherwise take action against the Syrian strongholds and refer to such action as "retaliation."

Much of the world, particularly those nations of the Third World which have been victims of U.S. foreign policy, doesn't view this country as a neutral peace-keeper in Lebanon. Rather, many nations see the U.S. as interfering in the affairs of Lebanon and surrounding regions in an effort to place and/or keep in power a government(s) friendly to it. Seeing the U.S. role in this light, Syria does not accept American violations of its air space as being part of any peace-keeping function, nor does it view U.S. "retaliatory" strikes as anything other than offensive.

When, therefore, Lt. Goodman's plane was shot down and he was captured, the Syrians held him as a "prisoner of war." The U.S., on the contrary, insisted that Goodman was a "hostage." In releasing the lieutenant to Jesse Jackson without receipt of anything which could be termed "ransom," the Syrians were able to weaken the U.S. government's portrayal of itself (via Goodman) as kidnap victim and strengthen their argument that, by violating Syrian air space, Goodman had committed an act of aggression and was subsequently being held as a prisoner of war.

In releasing Goodman, Syria spoke of the release as being both a humanitarian gesture and an act of good faith intended to move the U.S. to subsequent good-faith efforts in achieving peace.

While it is possible that this Syrian action may have been intended primarily as a humanitarian gesture, there is no question but that a latent function of it was to improve Syria's image and to throw the ball into America's court with respect to initiatives toward peace. Jesse Jackson was aware of the international public-relations benefits which the Syrian government could reap by cutting Goodman loose and was banking on Syrian consideration of these possible benefits when he decided to take on his mission.

But if public relations was the key ingredient in this scenario, why didn't the government of Syria release Goodman into the hands of, for example, Ambassador Donald Rumsfeld? The reason, in all likelihood, is that there was another key ingredient, that being the role America has played in shaping affairs in the Third World and resentment on the part of Third World people and governments of that role.

The U.S. and the nations of Europe (and the U.S.S.R. to some extent in modern times) have not only acted with outright contempt, and at other times with paternalism, toward nations in Africa, Asia, and in the Americas but have exhibited these same tendencies toward people of color within their own boundaries. As we recall, when the nation of Iran took U.S. "hostages," one of the first things Iranian officials did was release those U.S. citizens who were African (with one exception). In the course of the U.S. war with VietNam, African soldiers from the U.S. were frequently given preferential treatment (as compared to their Caucasian counterparts) when captured by the VietNameese liberation forces. Often U.S.-born African soldiers in the field were confronted by litera-

ture and other forms of communication from the VietNameese which told them, "Brother, this is not your fight."

The fact is that Uncle Sam has used his economic and military might to enforce his will in many parts of the Third World and has done so under the guise of bringing democracy to or preserving democracy in these various Third World regions. In so flexing his muscles under the guise of bringing or protecting democracy, freedom, etc. and simultaneously maintaining his own non-Caucasian population in a status of inferiority, he has left himself open to being viewed as a hypocrite.

President Assad of Syria was not unaware of either U.S. racist policies in its foreign relations or its policies of domestic racism when Jesse arrived in Damascus. The Syrian leader knew that, in the eyes of Reagan and much of the rest of the U.S. population, Jesse Jackson is "just another nigger and an uppity one at that." In releasing Goodman to another African, Sadat was, in effect, slapping Reagan's face.

Whether the "country preacher" went to Syria with primarily humanitarian or primarily personal political motivations, the fact is that there was nothing even remotely "magic" about what he accomplished. It was big but not magic and the publicity which has resulted should serve to heighten Jackson's credibility as a presidential candidate. The question that remains is that of what use he will put this center-stage attention to.

--the editor

.....
THE HARAMBEE FLAME IS THE MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION(an organization of African prisoners at the Nebraska State Pen in Lincoln).

Editor/David L. Rice

FROM OTHER SOURCES

Namibia:

"Repression and violation of human rights in Namibia today are as bad, if not worse, than they have ever been in our country.

"South Africa, by its most recent actions, has indicated beyond any doubt that it is unwilling to release Namibia into independence. Apart from a total military rule, it is at present working towards another so-called(internal) 'democratic election' to postpone if not scrap Resolution 435(UN Resolution 435 is the internationally accepted plan for Namibian independence.).

"The economic situation in Namibia today is worse than it has ever been. Unemployment, especially among the Blacks, is extremely high and would be very much higher if it were not for conscription which provides 'employment' to all men and boys between the ages of 16 and 25.

"...Black farm workers are paid between \$18 and \$36 per month. Some miners earn as little as 54¢ an hour.

"Out of the 1,376 students who graduated from high school in 1982, about 1,000 were whites. Four hundred of 1,379 students entered university, of which only twenty were Black. Nothing can illustrate better the crisis in Black education today.

"At the primary school level, only 16 percent of the white children are not in school, as opposed to 86 percent of the Black children.

"As far as health is concerned, the situation is even more critical. Whereas the central government spends \$34 per Black person per year(on health), the white ethnic authority spend \$211 per white person per year. Medical care is unavailable to most Blacks living in the rural areas, and there is a long wait for Blacks who are able to

get to the state hospitals...

"Section Six of the Terrorism Act empowers security officers to arrest, torture, and detain anybody for as long as they want, without ever being held responsible for their actions... People have died within hours of their arrests; some were 'fortunate' enough to end up in the hospital, and many have disappeared without a trace.

"A law prohibiting public gatherings prevents any group of more than twenty people to get together without the permission of a magistrate. Political parties have to denounce the armed struggle in their constitution in order for them to be granted this permission. Yet white racist parties can publicly proclaim to fight for retention of their rights with any means at their disposal, without any repercussions..."

-from an article by Dr. Abisai Shejavali on page 10 of the Dec. '83 issue of CALC REPORT/TWC BULLETIN

United States:

"At the rate African-Americans are losing farm lands, it is predicted that by 1990 there will be only about 10,000 African-American farms in this country. While all farms are declining, African-American farmers are losing land more than twice as fast as the national average.

Between 1969 and 1978, the total number of farms declined by 23.8 percent, but the number of African-American farms for that same period declined by 57.2 percent. The vast majority of African-American farms, 85.6 percent, were less than 50 acres in size.

"Problems confronting African-American farmers are racial discrimination, lack of institutional economic support and a tax structure geared to benefit large farm operations....

"It was found that in 1978 the average African-American farm income was \$7,584

ANNOUNCEMENTS

"The Communicator" on WGCI-107½ A.M. is looking for submissions of original poems or music on tape. If you are interested, write to:

Communicator Productions, Inc.
P.O. Box 1064
Calumet City, Ill.
60409

.....

A.N.R.O. ESSAY CONTEST

The African National Reparations Organization is sponsoring a nationwide Black History Month essay contest. It is open to African-American youth between the ages 16-22. The deadline for submitting an essay is February 21, 1984.

"The contest's purpose is to encourage young African-Americans to research, examine and take pride in our people's rich heritage," explains Dorothy Lewis, A.N.R.O.'s Chairwoman. "It also is a way for A.N.R.O. to raise needed funds and another way to get the reparations message out to young people."

"The prize winners receive cash awards up to one-hundred dollars. There is a required three dollar entry fee and the winners will be announced in the March issue of A.N.R.O.'s official newsletter, Reparations Now! For an entry form, contact:

A.N.R.O. c/o Corbin Seavers
Cooperstown Bldg. G227
Lexington, Kentucky 40508

.....

H.A.C.O. MEETINGS

The Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization meetings are now held on Tuesdays. We urge you to attend. To be placed on the outside guest roster, call Curtis Shield(471-3161) or write to H.A.C.O. Chairman David L. Rice.

P.O. Box 2500
Lincoln, NE.
68502-0500

--compared to \$17,325 for Caucasians...

"The proportion of FMHA (Farmers Home Administration) loans made to African-American farmers has declined, annually, since 1980. Included in the loans assistance is a requirement that minority farmers would receive low interest loans.

"The commission (Civil Rights) found that the majority of minority farmers were not provided low interest, but instead received their loans at regular interest rates and in some states African-American borrowers received proportionately fewer limited resources than Caucasians..."

-from an article on page ten of the Dec. 23rd. issue of AMERICAN MUSLIM JOURNAL

AFRIKAN POWER IN U.S.

The future of Afrikan people in this country depends upon our uniting to recognize who we are and whence we came and to build our own communities. The time has come for us to take a stand and define our own goals, to lead our own organizations and to support those organizations.

We must instill in our children a rejection of racist institutions and values of this society.

These concepts rest upon fundamental premises: that, before a group can enter the open society, it must first close its ranks; that group solidarity and unity are necessary before a group can achieve an effective bargaining position in a pluralistic society.

-Harold E. Davis

(Harold "Little Man" Davis is the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization Sgt.-at-Arms. It is hoped that his contribution will serve to encourage other members of H.A.C.O. to contribute.)

H.A.C.O. 'THOUGHT' T-SHIRTS



green ☐

black ☐

red ☐

50% cotton, 50% polyester
Available in any size

To order, send money order to:

Harambee Afrikan Cultural Org.
P.O. Box 2500
Lincoln, NE.
68502-0500

\$6.00 per t-shirt if picked up
\$7.00 if mailed. Write to us for
information about group rates.

H.A.C.O. MEETINGS FOR JAN.-MAR.

Jan. 10	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 17	3:00 p.m.
Jan. 24	6:00 p.m.
Jan. 31	3:00 p.m.
Feb. 7	6:00 p.m.
Feb. 14	3:00 p.m.
Feb. 21	6:00 p.m.
Feb. 28	3:00 p.m.
Mar. 6	6:00 p.m.
Mar. 13	3:00 p.m.
Mar. 20	6:00 p.m.
Mar. 27	3:00 p.m.

-POETRY-

Egalitarianism

i am not anybody's friend
nor is anyone my enemy
but as i walk the darkness away
the light proffers no respite
only a seed which to plant
that maybe tomorrow
the hate will not be minding me.

--Harold "Wili" Otey

Dedication To This Daughter (For Nadage Amia)

this child/seed
of the woman emerging
pink bows
in her multi/black/braids
honeygold skin
and eyes wide
with unscathed innocence
tiny fingers
grasping chocolate dolls
in taffeta dresses...
speaking to me
with words I taught

of Robeson
and Douglass
Turner/Tubman/Truth
and of course
Queen Nzinga and Hatshepsut/

of reagonomics
and political asylum
instead of persecution
for fellow Afrikans
from Haiti/

of holding
up my head
when times are rough
and "Mommy, don't cry
'cause Grandmama died.
her soul is free.
and didn't you say
God with us will always be?"

child/precious seed
of woman emerging
tiny sidekick/partner/friend

sometimes tears, trouble,
and scattered toys
yet ever Mama's true hope
and joy.

you have raised me
as i have raised you.
in your smallness,
daughter,
you are great.
in your innocent youth
you are ancient/
ageless
Spirit.

--Linda Cousins